

Sutton Archaeological Services

Watching Brief Report

on

Southall Manor Grounds

The Green, Southall, Ealing UB2 4BJ.

SNX 10: (TQ 124 793)

for

London Borough of Ealing



Fig. 1

John Rocque's Map 1768

SAS

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by

J G PERRY: May 2010

Summary

Sutton Archaeological Services (SAS) carried out an archaeological watching brief at Southall Manor Grounds, The Green, Southall, UB2 4BJ between 6th and 8th April 2010.

The site lay in an area of archaeological importance as defined in London Borough of Ealing Unitary Development Plan. Research by Sutton Archaeological Services for the research design indicated that there was Medieval to Post-Medieval archaeology and activity in the surrounding area.

The watching brief only revealed topsoil, sub soil deposits and made ground deposits. These deposits covered the natural brickearth.

There was no evidence of any Medieval and Post Medieval occupation or activity in the area, or of any other period other than modern.

It would appear from the watching brief that at some time in the past, the original deposits had been removed down to the natural ground and that cinder or other drainage deposits were then laid on the surface. These had then been covered by a turf and topsoil.

There was no evidence for any archaeology and the finds were 20th century CBM except for a sherd of Prehistoric pottery, a possible waste flake and a piece of burnt flint.

We suggest that no further archaeological monitoring or intervention is needed and that the archaeological condition in the planning consent has been fulfilled. The decision to discharge the archaeological condition, however, rests with the local planning authority on the advice of the Archaeological Officer at English Heritage.

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Situation

This research design concerns the proposed development at Southall Manor Grounds, The Green, Southall, UB2 4BJ.

The London Borough of Ealing approved planning permission for the proposed development and included an archaeological condition under PPG 16¹ in planning approval P/2009/3772/-WT dated 28th January 2010:

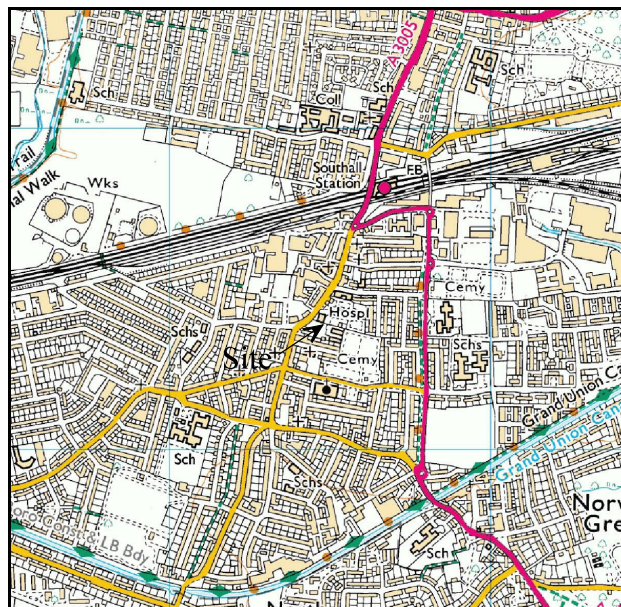


Fig. 2 Site Location © Crown Copyright MC/98/38

- No earth works shall take place on site, until the applicant, or their agents or successors in title, has secured the implementation of a programme of archaeological work in accordance with a scheme of investigation, which has been submitted and approved by the Local Planning Authority. This should include details of the archaeological watching brief, which shall be undertaken by a suitably qualified and experienced archaeologist being in attendance during work in order to record any archaeological features exposed.*

The London Borough of Ealing (the developer) has commissioned Sutton Archaeological Services (SAS) to carry out an archaeological watching brief and any resulting archaeological work that may be necessary.

The site

Location: The site lies in the London Borough of Ealing at the eastern side of Southall Manor Grounds. Portland Road and Merrick Road lie to the east with Osterley Park Road lying to the north. The Green lies on the west side of the site, with St. Anselm's Roman Catholic School and Havelock Cemetery to the south.

Topography: The site lies side of the Brent valley, with the ground sloping northwards. Ground levels around the site are about c. 31.50m aOD.

¹ Department of the Environment: *Planning Policy Guidance: Archaeology and Planning*, HMSO, 1990.

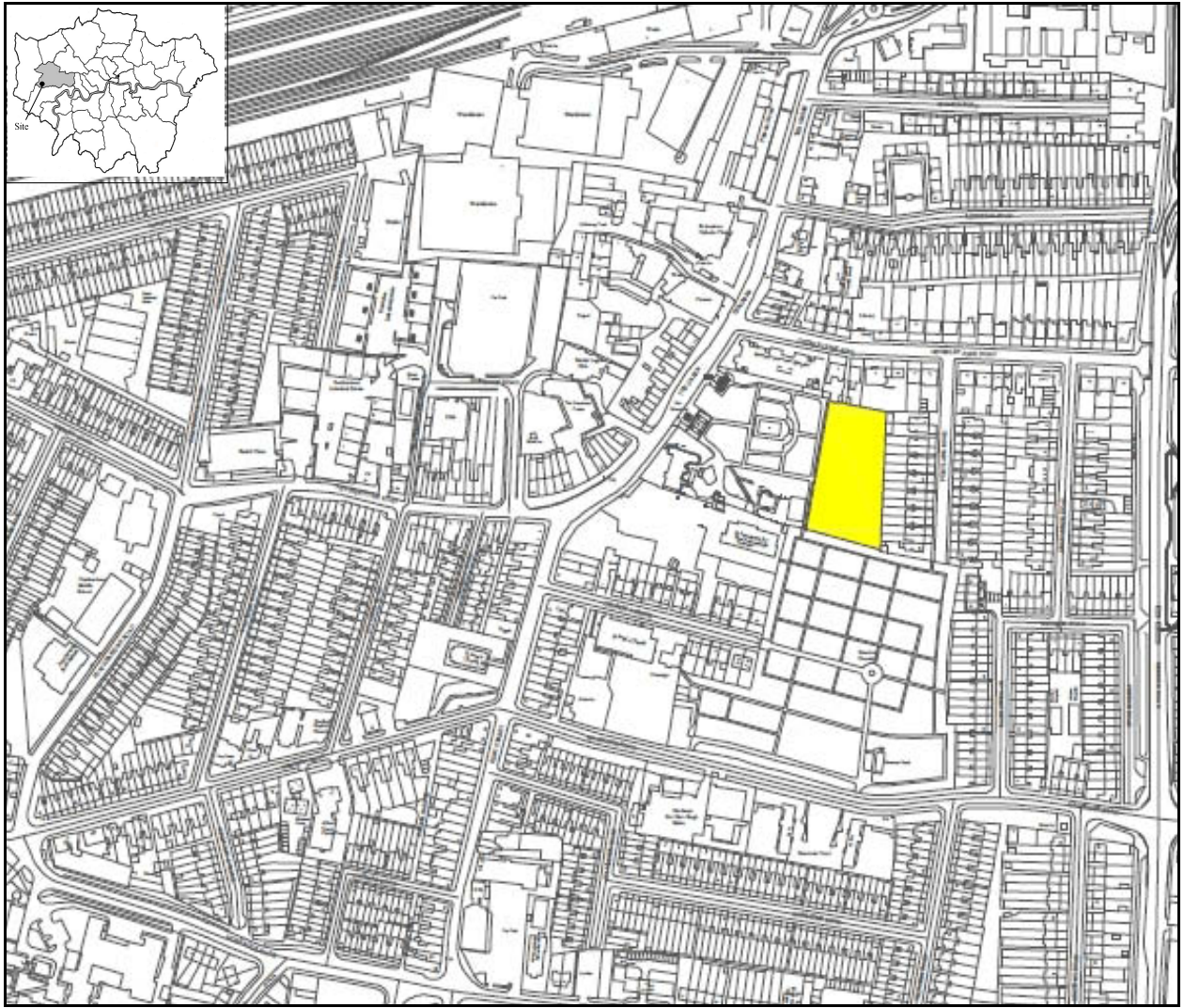


Fig. 3

Site location plan

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Geology: The basic geology consists of London Clay with brickearth over river terrace gravels in the Southall area.

The site is in the grounds of a timber-framed Elizabethan Manor House with yew trees and an old mulberry tree are said to have been planted by Henry VIII. The development area is part of a lawned area.

The development consisted of the construction of a children's playground with associated landscaping and paths, benches and picnic tables on the east lawn of the grounds.

Archaeological discussion

Prehistoric:

A number of Palaeolithic flint implements have been found along the Brent valley, many from old gravel pits. Many river valleys were used by Prehistoric peoples, as an easy way to penetrate deeper inland.

Before the archaeological work the potential for Prehistoric archaeology and activity on site was considered low.

Roman: The main centres of Roman occupation are in central London to the east or Putney, across the river to the south-east. The line of a Roman Road may well run west to east through the Hanwell area. Before the archaeological work there was insufficient information, so the potential for Roman activity in the area was considered low.

Saxon: The first mention of Southall comes from the will of a priest called Werhard, in 830 A.D., who bequeathed land in Norwood to the Archbishops of Canterbury. Originally Southall was a small hamlet in the larger parish of Norwood, but the parish of Southall came into being in 1864. Later, the name Southall was used instead of Norwood.

There was probably not a settlement here in the Saxon period, so the potential before the archaeological work was considered low.

Medieval to modern: Southall was not mentioned in the Domesday survey of 1086, because it was part of the manor of Hayes. It was owned by the Archbishops of Canterbury and leased to a number of different tenants throughout the Middle Ages. Although it was not mentioned in 1086, the church, and presumably the settlement, existed by the 12th century. The church stood in the centre of the southernmost part of the parish, almost on the southern boundary. Southall is mentioned in 1274 and in 1384 the names of 'Dormoteswell' (Dorman's Well) and Northcott both occur in a court roll. It is reasonable to assume, therefore, that all three of the later hamlets of Norwood, i.e. Norwood, Southall, and Northcott, were settled by the 14th century, and probably much earlier².

² VCH 1971 A History of the County of Middlesex, Volume 4, p.40-43.

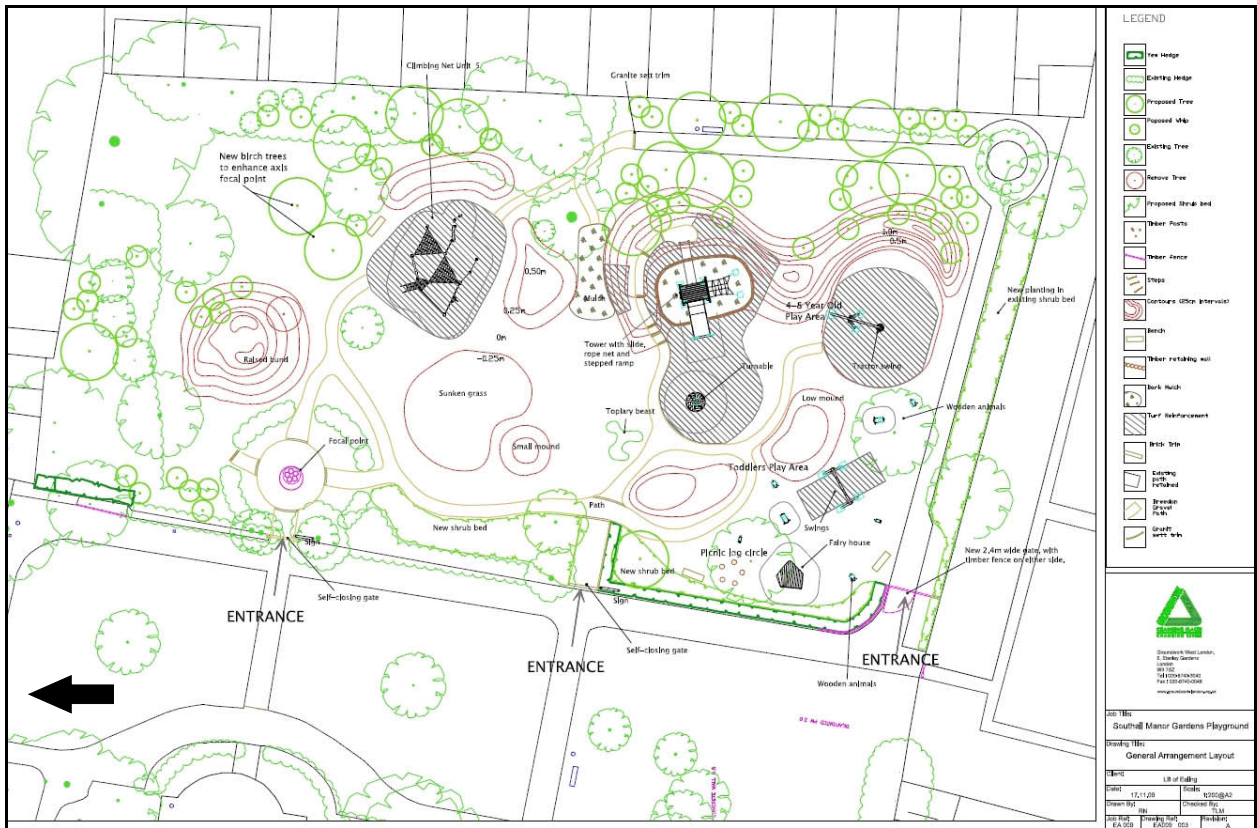


Fig. 4 Development plan

In 1587 the present day Manor House was built by Richard Awsiter and is now the oldest surviving building in Southall. Although much altered it is a Grade II listed. Southall Manor is of considerable architectural and archaeological significance. The east lawn area, although now part of the semi-formalised garden, was until the 19th century shown on maps as orchard. However, this area may contain hitherto unknown element of the estate or its management. The proposed development may, therefore affect remains of archaeological importance.

Before the archaeological work the potential for Medieval and Post Medieval archaeology and activity on this site was therefore considered medium.

Archaeological Proposals

Usually, where development may destroy archaeology, an archaeological investigation is undertaken to identify the presence or absence, extent, character, quality and date of any threatened deposits and, where necessary, to develop an appropriate mitigation strategy.

SAS proposed, therefore, to undertake an archaeological watching brief on the groundworks.

Archaeological method

Standards: SAS carried out the archaeological watching brief in accordance with:

- our research design dated June 2009.
- the Institute for Archaeologists Code of Conduct, Code of Approved Practice for the Regulation of Contractual Arrangement in Field Archaeology.
- the archaeological guidance papers issued by English Heritage.
- English Heritage's Guidance papers for Archaeological Fieldwork Projects

Control: All excavation work was done under the control of the archaeologists on site. The open areas were excavated with a 360° excavator, using a smooth-edged ditching buckets and a toothed bucket where appropriate.

Non-archaeological deposits: we removed by machine, in level spits of no more than 10-15 cm, the turf, topsoil, sub-soil, made ground and natural deposits. Work continued removing all overburden until we reached the first significant archaeological layer or the limit of excavation at which point all machine work ceased. In this way the areas were excavated without finding any archaeological deposits.

Site records: We recorded all features as we proceeded, by written records, plans, sections and photographs. In all, we recorded 4 contexts - numbered [001] to [004] - in a single context recording system. The site was recorded in accordance with the Fieldwork Methodology in our research design, and using the Museum of London's recording system.

Levels: All levels were taken from the developers's site survey.

Watching brief report

The first stage of the development was the removal of the turf and most of the topsoil, a very dark grey brown sandy clay [001] to a depth of about 30cm across the site. Most of the work on the playground consisted of building up from this level, either for small mounds of tarmac paths. For

some playground equipment, it was necessary to excavate a series of holes into which each of the equipment support legs would be inserted. Each item is dealt with in turn (Fig. 4).

Climbing Frame

Eight holes were cut for the supporting legs measuring, each hole being about 1.20m wide, 1.60m long and 0.85m deep. The stratigraphy consisted of the remaining 15cm of topsoil [001] (31.25m aOD) above 15cm of cinder [002](31.10m aOD) . Below the cinder was what appeared to be the natural brickearth, a very soft, orangish brown silty clay [003] (30.95m aOD) containing moderate amounts of small to large flint pebbles. This context was not bottomed. The upper surface of context 003 was marked by occasional smears of red tile or brick and charcoal. Several runs of orange red ceramic mole drains had been cut into context 003.

Slide

Two holes were cut for the slide itself, the first measured 3.10m long, 2.60m wide and 0.75m deep and the second measured 1.60m long, 1.50m wide and 0.75m deep. To install the tower part of the slide one hole was cut measuring 1.80m long, 1.60m wide and 0.70m deep. The first context was the remains of the topsoil [001] (31.27m aOD) up to 10cm deep. Unlike the climbing frame, the next context was a very soft, very dark orange brown sandy clay [004] (31.18m aOD) with moderate amounts of small to medium flint pebbles and occasional medium to large cinder. This context was about 10cm deep. The natural [003] was the final context (31.08m aOD) .

Tractor Swing with tyres

To install the swing with tyres, two holes were cut. The first measured 1.60m long, 1.50m wide and 0.80m deep, while the second measured 2.80m long, 1.60m wide and 0.75m deep. The stratigraphy was the same as for the slide, with 10cm of topsoil [001] (31.31m aOD) over 15cm of the sandy clay [004] (31.21m aOD) and the very dark orange brown sandy clay [003](31.06m aOD). The finds of a sherd of Prehistoric pottery, a possible waste flake and a piece of burnt flint.

Swings

Four holes were excavated for the swings, arranged in a square, each measuring 1.60m long, 1.50m wide and 0.80m deep. The stratigraphy was the same as for the slide, but with 20cm of topsoil [001](31.06m aOD) over 13cm of the sandy clay [004](31.17m aOD) and the very dark orange brown sandy clay [003](31.04m aOD).

Fairy house

A single excavation was made to install the fairy house one cut was made measuring 3.20m long, 2.40m wide and 0.60m deep. The upper layer was 12cm of topsoil [001](31.06m aOD) over a 24cm [005](31.17m aOD) disturbed layer comprising material from the upper and underlying layers. The final context was the orange brown silty clay [003](31.04m aOD) into which a brick sump had been cut.

Assessment and interpretation

The evidence from the SAS preliminary research indicated that there was Medieval and Post-Medieval settlement and/or activity in the surrounding area.

The watching brief only revealed topsoil, sub soil deposits and made ground deposits. These deposits covered the natural brickearth.

There was no evidence of any Medieval and Post Medieval occupation or activity in the area, or of any other period other than modern.

It would appear from the watching brief that at some time in the past, the original deposits had been removed down to the natural ground and that cinder or other drainage deposits were then laid on the surface. These had then been covered by a turf and topsoil.

There was no evidence for any archaeology and the finds were 20th century CBM except for a sherd of Prehistoric pottery, a possible waste flake and a piece of burnt flint.

Archaeological Potential

Following the watching brief our revised view is that this site has no potential for archaeological remains of any period.

Conclusions and Recommendations

Our findings set out above lead us to conclude that the proposed development did not threaten to destroy any archaeological remains of national, regional or local importance, deserving further investigation or preservation.

We suggest that no further archaeological monitoring or intervention is needed and that the archaeological condition in the planning consent has been fulfilled. The decision to discharge the archaeological condition, however, rests with the local planning authority on the advice of the Archaeological Officer at English Heritage.

Publications and dissemination

The evidence is not worthy of publication, but a note will be placed in the *London Archaeologist's* round-up.

Archive

The resulting archive will be donated by the developer and deposited with the Reading Museum when the final report has been completed.

Acknowledgements

Sutton Archaeological Services to thank Craig and Wal of Visible Changes Ltd, and Jan Anderson the Landscape Architect at the London Borough Of Ealing for their help and assistance in the carrying out of the watching brief.



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